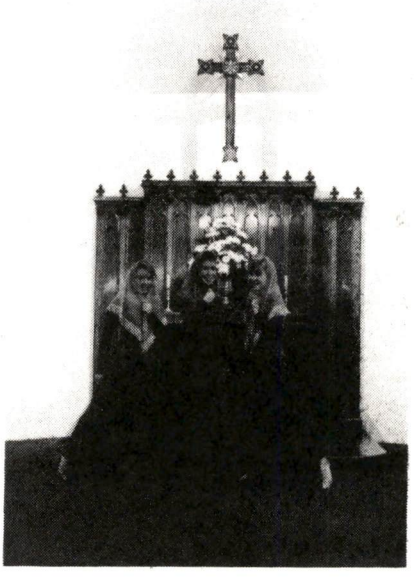
Sacred Dance Guild Journal



volume 30 number 2 Winter 1987

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The JOURNAL is the official publication of the Sacred Dance Guild, a non-profit international corporation, founded in 1958, and providing members with information and opportunities for enriching their faith through movement and dance.

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Sacred Dance Guild Journal

President's Message

It was four months ago on my birthday that Barrie planted a strange seed in what I thought was the rocky infertile landscape of my soul. Imagine my shock when after much prayer and even more resistance, that seed began to sprout. I found five willing and very able people to serve with me on the executive board, only one of which I knew. And if that wasn't miracle enough, I began to see myself as capable of this responsibility. Only the Divine could so convict me. And only the Divine will nourish this sprout sprung in a dry and thirsty land. All you who pray for and work with me have joined God in this endeavor. I humbly thank you and pray with gratitude that I will be able to reciprocate.

"Awakenings" is a strange thing to reflect on in November, especially for us Northerners who experience nature's sleep so intensely. I had the good fortune to spend this past weekend in Florida, where it seems nature does not sleep. The simple truth came to me: you cannot awaken unless you've been asleep. I was relieved to come back to Michigan where my instincts told me patterns were normal. For within the core of my being is the knowledge that dormancy is empowering. In that same place resides the hope and knowledge of Spring. So, like God who rested after the work of Creation, I welcome sleep, rest, Winter, dormancy, stillness, as a force which enables me to prepare for growth and movement.

So as you read this, it is Winter and nature's sleep seems to remain absolute and fixed. But the sun steadily climbs higher each day and her God ordained life-giving power awakens the sleeping earth. Crocus are so eager to awaken, they burst through the snow. The mighty oak awakens late. (likes to sleep in like me) Between the resurrection of the crocus and the oak, all of life is reborn. And we join this age old Dance and celebrate our rebirth and resurrection. Dance with the Spirit who empowers you as you sleep. Dance with the Spirit who awakens you to grow and manifest God's glory. Dance for the Board as we continue to work for the healthy growth of the Guild. Your prayers are the gentle warm spring rain.

Dancing with God,

Editorial

"Awakenings" is our theme for this Winter issue. For your editor this means more than typing all the wonderous material that reaches me. We have a new Executive Board so it is a new awakening for me as editor, for new and innovative ideas will spring from this group also. That is what makes this Guild the alive, growing, and always developing worship art form that it is.

Your Editor has a couple of requests. First, I know many of you read material on or about movement in worship. Do write me about your readings and your recommendations. The same goes for television. Secondly, do let your Editor know of future happenings for the Calendar and then follow up with results for the Activities section of the Journal.

The Spring Journal theme is VISIBILITY OF SACRED DANCE. As I noted in the Fall Issue, perhaps this is a good time to have discussions on the necessity for costumes, props, lights, the look that makes the sacredness of dance for worship come alive, for after all it is a visual art. In some cases this aliveness might come from the absence of such visuality. Also since this is our 30th year, perhaps those of you who have been in the Guild since its inception might like to offer a few words of remembrance or advice, and the newest of members might like to add their feelings or ideas.

God Bless each of you during these wonderous Holy Days that approach us.

Toni' Intravaia
Editor

Deadlines for the Journal: August 15, November 15, and Feruary 15. **Deadlines for the Events Calendar**: September 15, December 15, and March 15. Articles of 500 words or less, dance activity, chapter/region/membership news, letters and black and white photographs should be send by deadline dates to: Sacred Dance Guild Journal, Toni' Intravaia, Editor, 201 Hewitt, Carbondale, IL 62901.

In this issue...

IN THIS ISSUE

6 *Awakenings*

- 6 From One Early Member
- 7 The Spirit Within
- 9 The Children of God
- 11 Bringing Home Sacred Dance from Abroad
- 12 In Eastern Pennsylvania
- 13 Rebirth = A Deeper Prayer Life
- 14 Sojourner Truth
- 16 Confessions of a Liturgical Dancer
- 19 In the Beginning - a New Chapter
- 20 To Dance is to Wake Up

1 *President's Message*
2 *Editorial*
5 *Letters to the Editor*
23 *Membership News*
25 *Board Bits*
27 *Chapter News*
29 *Memos From the Minutes*
30 *Recommended Reading*
30 *Sacred Dance Activity*

COVER: St. Paul's Youth Dance Choir, Nutley, N.J.: from L to R: Michelle Beck, Denise Beck and Jill Sorensen. Journal Contributors: Toni' Intravaia, Editor; Susan Cole, Calligraphy; Elaine Friedrich, Arline G. Terrell, Rev. Nancy Roth, Doug Adams, Terre Sychterz, Jeannine Bunyan, Carla DeSola, Rev. Kathleen LaCamera, Pam Gwozdz, Cynthia Winton-Henry.

It was smiles all around when **Barrie Gibby**, *President of the Guild for the past three years, received a Swedish glass platter engraved* **Sacred Dance Guild, 1984-87.** *The gift was from the members of her Executive Boards in appreciation of her leadership and devotion to the Guild. Representing those who served during her Presidency were (left to right)* **Dana Schlegel,** *Vice President; Barrie, holding the platter;* **Kay Troxell,** *Recording Secretary.*

Letters to the Editor

From **Pam Gwozdz,** *Chairperson of the Ohio Chapter of the Sacred Dance Guild: October 15, 1987*

Dear Sacred Dance Guild Members, Future Members, and Friends of Sacred Dance:

May the Dancing Leaves of Autumn lift your Spirit.

This is to inform you that we are now officially The Ohio Chapter of the Sacred Dance Guild. We had our first official meeting October 4, 1987 after a very successful Liturgical Dance weekend at St. Joseph Christian Life Center.

(Ed. Note: Congratulations to the Ohio Chapter from all SDG members!

*

From **Dottie Johnson**, *Maryland, October 21, 1987:*

A quick note of thanks for the Journal and Directory which came yesterday. Both impressive!! I browsed quickly - appreciated your words and loyalty - lots of thought provoking reading. Next time will be a roster of new names! I appreciated the pictures. My own busy life goes on - enough w/dance work to keep me perking - but not too much pressure!!

*

From **Ruthe E. Christenson,** *Newton, MA, August 28, 1987:*

Thank you so much for the Sacred Dance Journals. You were very kind to see that the family received this loving tribute to brother Bob (Rev. Robert Storer). I will see that the members of the family each receive one.

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETINGS
Open to all SDG members

Saturday, February 6, 1988, 10:00 a.m., place to be announced.
Saturday, April 16, 1988, 10:00 a.m. place to be announced.
Thursday, July 7, 1988 Luncheon, Denver Festival

Awakenings

Two stirrings come to mind in pondering AWAKENINGS . . . and the two a's within that word. One is the "aha" in being roused anew to meet and celebrate morning, another season, a new friend, a new dance, a new space, another way to do the old; and the second is the "alleluia" in having recognized the "aha" and allowing yourself to be moved to new heights and depths of praise for the Dance of Life. Our journeys take us daily through awakenings, but our limited awareness keeps our "aha's and "alleluia's" at a minimum.

The next few pages shed new light on some reasons to be roused, alert, and watchful for those "aha" heights followed by those "alleluia" thanks. Let's discover something new every day. Praise God for the new. Aha! Alleluia!●

(Ed. Note: The above introduction by Barrie Gibby, SDG former President.)

FROM ONE OF OUR EARLY MEMBERS

By Elaine Friedrich

Having danced most of my life, I was always intrigued by evidence of sacred dance -- e.g., Ruth St. Denis' dancing at St. Mark's-in-the-Bouwerie in the 20's, Ted Shawn's choreography of the *Doxology* and *Hound of Heaven,* Margaret Taylor's pioneering liturgies. Although I was not aware of the Sacred Dance Guild until the late 60's, my introduction did come through one of the early members, Elyse Robert, close friend of Ruth St. Denis and director of "Miss Ruth's" Rhythmic Choir. When I met her, Elyse was the Guild's past Regional Director for California and was conducting at her church a sacred dance class, which I joined. Elyse continues to be a mentor and an inspiration to all of us in Southern California, and we are blessed by her friendship.

Doug Adams, then California's Regional Director, asked me to take over the southern half of the state after I had attended his workshops here and in Berkeley. At that time there was such a hunger for sacred dance that we were able to draw some 60 to 80 people, some traveling 200 miles to attend one-day sessions. It was then, in the 70's, that people began asking for an ongoing group. We formed the Southern California chapter of SDG and I called myself the mother hen, but Elyse really deserves that title--or possibly "fairy godmother."

We were not without growing pains -- travel distance, difficulty in finding officers, confusions about dues, local and national -- but we managed to survive then until today we have an active chapter with enthusiastic and effective leadership. Other than our own events, many workshops, classes and retreats are offered in Southern California where dancers, new and old, and come together to share and learn. My only regret about the Guild is that I didn't get involved much sooner. ●

AWAKENING THE SPIRIT WITHIN

by Arline G. Terrell

In a soft green meadow where Cedars stand as sentinels and waving leaves of Sycamores echo piano notes, a group of women from nineteen to ninety gather for a class.

Their arms rise in a vertical stretch and in a passing rhythm they feel a connection between the depths of the earth and the blue infinity of the sky.

It is summer in Portland, Connecticut where the Noyes School of Rhythm has been operating a summer camp since 1921. Women come from all over the world to get back in touch with nature, to shed the artificiality of their lives and feel a connectedness to the universe.

Ask any camper and they would agree it is like "giving your soul a bath in nature rhythms and the body reflects just as naturally as when a breeze comes along and blows the petals."

The vertical stretch continues, each time deepening in the receiving force until it opens into a horizontal stretch, the giving force. "When these forces are equal and they cross, there is no weight," taught Florence Fleming Noyes, the founder of this movement. And, "the perfect manifestation of these two forces brings balance," she added.

To achieve balance and weightlessness in dance is the dream of most dancers. But wait, there is more. Mrs. Noyes also believed Rhythm, as she called her dance form, is not an end in itself, but a means.

"Where does sacred dance fit into this?" you ask. Think a minute of the vertical (receiving) stretch and the horizontal (giving) stretch and where these two rhythms intersect. They cross at the center of our beings, not our thinking heads, but our feeling hearts. This is the spot where our spirituality springs forth.

This same "spot" is also the well spring of Noyes technique. It is from this center that all movement unfolds. Therefore, much of the technique is devoted to opening the door to this source of feeling.

"Openness. First, last and always, openness in movement. This does not mean your body opens. It means that you feel openness (willingness, allowing) in your consciousness, your body response to the rhythm of openness. You must not let your anatomy prevent what you want to feel. The body if obedient helps you hold the concept while you move," she advised her pupils.

Through the use of animal rhythms and nature similes students are freed of preconceptions. A new vitality is released when the universal forces of nature are tapped. There is technique for relaxing and strengthening every part of the body resulting in fluidity and wholeness. "Reflect the great majestic forces which hold everything in the universe - great central purpose, law and order - concept of the Infinite. Just rest in it. The body reflects it," she told her pupils in the 1920's.

Even today her words have special meaning, "If the body is free and moves with joy and freedom it helps give mental and spiritual freedom."

The Greek ideal suited her needs for classical dress and style. It offered an endless source of mythological and elemental inspiration for class work, masques and group movement. Performance has always been part of the total picture, but it has never over-shadowed dance for its own sake. She firmly believed that learning to move on rhythm helped people live with greater ease and flexibility. And for those in the creative arts, it has proved to be a source of inspiration, unleashing creative energy.

Even now, after a day of classes and group work, the beautiful wooden pavilion in its natural setting comes alive with kerosene lamps and music. It invites the spirit within each participant to move freely and join in a dance of timeless dimension.

When she died in 1928 she left her pupils a vision and a challenge. "Feel always a oneness toward the whole of humanity. This can be an inspirational experience. Through faith; obedience follows. Oneness, melting into the whole; individuality and freedom follow. Great joy!"

Classes in Noyes Rhythm are offered in New york and many other cities. The Noyes School of Rhythm Foundation operates two summer camps in Portland: one for adults, another for children and families. For further information, contact Arline Terrell. ●

Two Noyes dancers

Children preparing to be the Red Sea with their teacher, Nancy Roth

"THIS INDEED IS THE PLAYING OF THE CHILDREN OF GOD"

(The Grand Awakening)
by The Rev. Nancy Roth

"Theology," one of my seminary professors was fond of repeating, "is merely a very serious game." My professor was speaking about theology as **words**, words about God. since our knowledge about God cannot be complete in this life, words are only pointers. The God-experience comes to us in many ways: through the unconscious gropings of the human spirit, through the events which happen to us, through the ponderings of the intellect, and only partly through the words we are taught as part of our religious traditions. And even those words are merely an **attempt** to talk about the human experience of God. Behind the words lies a deeper truth.

What lies behind the words we speak?

The psychologist Jean Piaget tells us that as children we built our intellectual knowledge through responding physically to the world. The child "knows" first in a way that has not yet found expression in words. While we as adults often tend to look down on such "preconceptual" knowledge as a lesser form of knowing, it is actually the way that we, ourselves, know things first of all. It is a way of knowing which we might label as "**before** words," and it is a powerful tool in religious education.

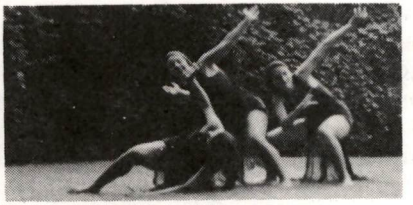
After all, perhaps non-verbal religious education is more accurate education, since words are only pointers to the reality beyond them! By using imagery, movement, music and imagination in exploring theological themes, we as teachers not only teach with the tools which are part of the child's own play repertoire, but we ourselves can grow in our awareness of God, as we provide an opportunity for ourselves to "remember" religious

truth in a different way. "Re-membering" might be seen as bringing the bodily members -- ears, eyes, mouth, hands, arms, legs, torso, fingers, toes -- into the theological enterprise.

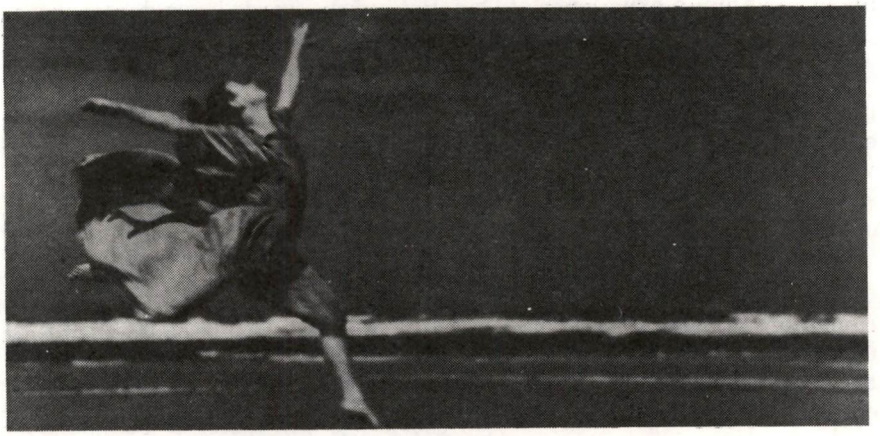
Perhaps it was this unity of playfulness and faith which Clement of Alexandria had in mind when he wrote,

Joyful is the spirit of those / who are children in Christ / and order their lives with patient perseverance. / This indeed is the playing of the children of God.

In my work with pre-schoolers in church and class situations, some of my favorite themes have been "theological" ones which we have danced and dramatized. We have been everything God created, and some things God had a little help with (such as dump-trucks). We have been the Red Sea, the happy Isrealites, and the cloud that Moses followed through the desert. We have been the dry bones in Ezekiel's vision of the valley. We have been Jesus healing the sick, and we have been the children coming to Jesus. We have had Palm Sunday parades, and Good Friday Stations of the Cross. Since I teach at both a Hebrew YM-YWHA and an Episcopal Church, as well as my own private classes in what I call "More Than Dance", I find many contexts in which I can encourage the "very serious game" of theology. It may not look like theology, but the children are learning about what it is to be human beings who feel and pretend and move and dance, and who are loved by their Creator. It may not look like theology, but it is sowing the seeds which will grow someday into mature faith, a faith that will be a part of adult life as it has been part of childhood! ●



*From **Shadows in the Night***



***Gayle Partlow** — Dance for Joy*

BRINGING HOME SACRED DANCES FROM ABROAD

by Doug Adams

Most advances in culture occur as a result of contacts with those from other parts of the world. In such encounters, both parties expand their technical and theoretical horizons. Advances in dance (and sacred dance) have been clearly based on such contacts. And the renewal of sacred dance largely depends upon such wider contacts. Each of us is aware of how much we advance as a result of attending a national or international sacred dance festival; and so I strongly urge every Sacred Dance Guild member to plan on attending the Sacred Dance Guild national festival in Denver, July 6-10, 1988 and the Pacific School of Religion "Dance and Religion" week, July 18-22, 1988.

The greatness of dance in the United States is in large part a result of the wide range of different cultures that have immigrated here. But as we have restricted immigration, we need to renew the dance by travelling to foreign lands or by bringing the foreign dancers here. Through extensive travels abroad, I have recently seen how rapidly and powerfully sacred dance is developing around the world. Across the South Pacific (from Hawaii through Tahiti and west to Cook Islands and Fiji and New Guinea), one sees the churches using their dances increasingly in worship as inculturation is appreciated. And the sacred dance is booming in Australia where leaders such as Cathy Lee through Corinthians VI and Mary Jones through the Christian Dance Fellowship have developed major networks of sacred dancers.

A new vitality enters our sacred dance and worship through such exposure to dances from abroad. Each new idiom of dance allows expression of a facet of the faith that we did not glimpse before. Just as Paul's expansion of Christianity into the Greek world revealed aspects of the gospel not seen by the Jerusalem church; so, the expansion of sacred dance throughout the world reveals facets of the faith to which we have been blind.

Because I was so impressed this year with the dances being developed by the hula liturgical dancers at Hilo, Hawaii, I am bringing them this coming summer to join the teaching faculty for our PSR dance week, July 18-22. I cherish for you the vitality your sacred dance will gain from studying traditional and contemporary hula with this group that uses hula regularly in their Christian worship. We have much to learn from the Pacific Islands, a fourth or fifth world. And these dancers (Myra and Clayton Kua, Joe Camacho, Paul Neves, Marie Roberts, and George DeCosta) give us refreshing new perspectives on sacred dance. Of course our dance faculty this coming summer at PSR will also include outstanding sacred dance leaders from the continental United States: Carla DeSola, Margaret Taylor, Cynthia Winton-Henry, Martha Ann Kirk, Michael Mansfield, Dane Packard, Barbara Lyon, Doug Adams, Dan Johnson, Jim Lawer, Valerie DeMarinis, Ned Reidy, Phyllis Magal, and Michael Deferrari. Come join us in bringing home sacred dances from abroad to renew our faith. ●

AWAKENINGS IN EASTERN PENNSYLVANIA

by Terre Sychterz

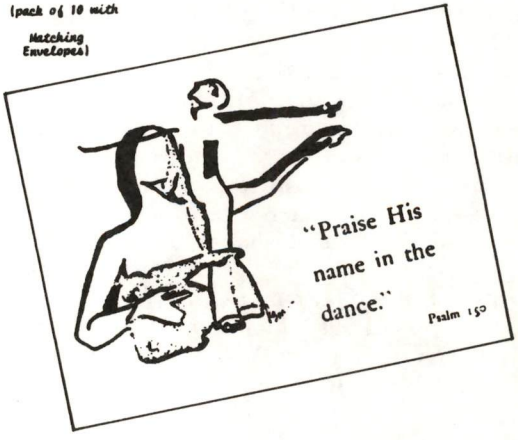
Awakenings in Eastern Pennsylvania Chapter are our membership and workshop kit. Last year at a general meeting we evaluated our membership and the need to do some footwork to improve membership. The membership was adaquate but small for this Chapter. A goal of 40 members was established and by the Spring was obtained. A goal for 1987-88 was established for 50 members and was achieved by October of 1987. This is a realistic number of members for this Chapter. The areas that helped improve membership are varied. First, setting an objective is essential to reaching any goal. A more assertive encouragement from present members is necessary. Sponsoring workshops is key to bringing new people to the Guild. Members who provide leadership for workshops, lectures and presentations are a source of advertisement for the Guild. These are a few of the ways that have been used by this Chapter to promote membership. It's exciting to see the numbers growing but even more exciting to have new faces who are spirited and energetic about sacred dance.

The Workshop Kit was established to help those planning a workshop know where to begin, proceed and end. The kit includes a sheet entitled "How to Plan a Workshop" which gives step by step procedure. These are flyers and evaluation forms from previous workshops to be used as samples for developing those needed for a particular workshop. There is a final evaluation form which hosts of the workshop fill out after the workshop with pertinent information to be sent to the Chapter Representative.

This information is invaluable when writing the Annual Report. All the information one needs about a workshop is on that evaluation form and can then be transferred on to the Annual Report. There is a contact person listed in the Kit. So any quetions one may have about a workshop can be forwarded to a competent person with experience in planning workshops. Hopefully this will be a source of helping and encouraging workshop planners. It will go into use this Spring for our Spring Sharing Workshop. ●

NOTE CARDS

(pack of 10 with Matching Envelopes)



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REBIRTH = A DEEPER PRAYER LIFE

by Jeannine Bunyan, President Southern California Chapter

Some of us are fortunate to inherit our faith--that is to say, it has always been a daily family experience in our home. Others of us come into our faith by an individual encounter with God. By whatever path we arrive into our faith, a personal relationship with our Creator inevitably requires an inward journey! With this committee relationship there follows the desire to worship and serve. In order to answer this call, one is compelled to investigate self-identity and make choices which, hopefully, please God.

To be the trailblazer for another's journey is an awesome task. Each Prayer workshop I lead fosters my continual gratitude for the gift of dance through which God speaks directly to the hearts of participants. I find "emotion-in-motion" a useful facilitator to motivate their journey.

Among the primary emotions we consider are happiness and sadness, which usually proceed fairly well. However, when we investigate our deeper prayer life, we come face-to-face with God, and that becomes an awakening experience which is new and can be frightful. I have discovered that most of us are afraid of the unknown--we are afraid of Fear itself.

Our inward journey is a lifelong process, and Movement Ministry has a valuable contribution to make in moving our journey closer to God. I usually conduct my "Prayers that Move Us" Workshop as a series of at least eight weeks. This helps to allow time for the healing and forgiveness which are an integral part of the awakening process by which one arrives at acceptance of the newly birthed, newly uncovered self. At the concluding session of this Prayer series, I invite the participants to create a Personal Prayer in movement emphasizing their newly awakened awareness of self--the total integration of one's mind/body/spirit in a personal/reciprocal relationship with God.*

* "MY GIFT" - *Jeannine Bunyan* - ©

O Lord my God,
I bring my mind to understand;
I bring my hands to do your work;
I bring my feet to follow you;
I bring my heart to offer you my Love.
Who I am,
As I am,
I kneel to hear your bidding. Amen •

praying together...

SOJOURNER TRUTH

Directed by Carla Desola

Choreographed by Carla DeSola, Marie Delapalme, Greg Reynolds and Maria Mitchell

Music: G. Crumb, B. Johnson, Traditional

Dear SDG Members,

Barrie Gibby requested that I write a few words on *Sojourner*, a dance performed in the closing liturgy of the June 1987 SDG festival on dance and social justice held at Sarah Lawrence College. I am writing this as an informal letter to the Sacred Dance Guild family, since I am enroute, and far from desk and notes.

Sojourner is based on the life of *Sojourner Truth*, an extraordinary, inspirational and prophetic black woman. She was born a slave in Ulster County, N.Y., in 1797, and lived to travel up and down the land proclaiming the abolition of slavery and speaking out for women's rights. I will try to record something of the thinking, emotional and working process that went into the creation of the dance.

It began when I opened *Sojourner* magazine (A Christian peace publication) and read Joyce Hollyday's gripping story of her life. My eyes swam with tears when I read of Sojourner Truth hiding behind a trunk in a meeting tent, trembling with fear as white hooligans began converging on a women's convention. She said to herself something like "Do you believe in God?!!", got up and diverted them away from the tent by leading them to a hilltop, and amidst hoots and cries began to sing one spiritual after another, "like oil on agitated waters," and won the crowd over.

I gasp at that kind of courage. For me, it parts the curtains that are so hard to open on what it means to practice non-violence, and to "walk the second mile." (By the way, that story never did appear in the dance.) However, the image of one song sung after another to soothe a hostile crowd, immediately translated into one dance after another; sometime later I saw Marie Delapalm's solo to "His Eye is on the Sparrow" and I thought "Aha! we've already begun." (We transformed it later to become the closing trio.)

Initially I did not consider creating a dance based on *Sojourner Truth* as I didn't feel comfortable designing a work based on such a significant black heritage. Yet, are we one family in God or not? Finally I called up two black women acquaintances of mine, Margaret McCaden and Inge Hardison, both deeply spiritual women; Margaret, a drama director and Inge, a sculptress, who had actually done a beautiful dance-like figure of Sojourner Truth, capturing her stepping out to "proclaim God's truth." Margaret said, "If you feel it from within, go ahead." (And, I knew she would bless and help me.)

As I talked to Margaret I was gazing at Sojourner's face on the cover of the magazine. Greg Reynold's face merged with her face and also Marie's. Greg, a black dancer (creator of *The Passion According to Mary*) and Marie, a tall white dancer with a deep love of God. Sojourner was described as tall and thin with a love of God in her heart. I decided on a double cast: Marie

and Greg as Sojourner and then another grace occurred when I realized I needed a narrator. Allan Tung suggested Maria Mitchell - a black woman, a thrilling dancer, and actress.

The first rehearsal was the test for me. I called Marie and Greg together, read to them portions of her life and **set up a scene**. I needed to see if they were right for the part, if a man and a woman as *sojourner* would work, and if we could do it in a collaborative way; I would structure the scene, we would pray together, asking *Sojourner* for guidance, and I would shape material from their improvisation. That was exactly what happened. In the first rehearsal Greg latched on to Sojourner as an old woman (Aunty Sojourner Truth), looking back over her life. I handed him an imaginary American flag to sew, as if stitching together the American ideals. (Sojourner actually said that a boll weevil must have gotten into the American Constitution when it came to black rights.)

Marie was Sojourner as a young girl, Isabella, still a slave. I played a section of eerie Crumb music, and the piece was on its way (with surprising few rehearsals for a complex work, involving many, many changes). It is still "a work in progress".

I wanted very much to share the dance with the SDG Festival (as it combines both social justice themes with a classical mystical spirituality. The pivotal turning point of Sojourner Truth is best described by her own words:

"Well, jest as I was goin' I met God! an' says I, 'O God, I didn't know as you was so great! 'An' I turned right round an' come into the house....

"I could feel (God) burnin', burnin', burnin' all around me, an' goin' through me; an' I saw I was so wicked, it seemed as if it would burn me up. An' I said, "O somebody, somebody, stand between God an' me! for it burns me!'

"Then...I felt as it were somethin' like an umbrella that came between me an' the light, an' I felt it was somebody....I begun to feel 'twas somebody that loved me...And finally somethin' spoke out in me an' said, 'This is Jesus!'....An' then the whole world grew bright...An' I begun to feel sech a love in my soul as I never felt before....

"An' then, all of a sudden, it stopped, an' I said, "Dar's de white folks, that have abused you, an' beat you, an' abused your people--think o' them!' But then there came another rush of love through my soul, an' I cried out loud-- 'Lord, Lord, I can love even de white folks!' "

Three special moments of the dance for me: (1) Greg and Maria wrapped in the flag with Maria proclaiming the "Ain't I a Woman" speech. (2) Maria, who has been gasping out the "Our Father", after Sojourner (Maria and Greg) has been beaten by her master; suddenly, with a groan, she cries, **Mama!** (It came from an inspired moment of improvisation). (3) the joyful climax, Maria swirling in to join beautiful Maria and Greg, all proclaiming, I'm free, I'm free.

"Thou are my **last** master,
and **thy** name is Truth, and
Truth shall be my abiding
name 'til I die."

Carla DeSola. •

CONFESSIONS OF A LITURGICAL DANCER

by Rev. Kathleen LaCamera, Artist
Director, The Vine Dance Theatre and
Executive Director, The Foundation for Religion and the Arts

There is much assumed and little said about the kinds of dances that are deemed "appropriate" for use in worship. I believe that we subtly and not so subtly limit the scope and style of movement we bring into our liturgies, and in doing so, limit the powerful contribution that dance uniquely can make to our worship lives. The more I dance, the more painful these limits become in what they leave out of life in worship. In a way, this reflection is a "confession" in the classic sense of the word. The way I feel about this issue is confessional -- it has everything to do with what I believe about God.

For me, the "Dance" has become something very personal, something impossible to talk about without talking about the life experiences that are inextricably connected to it. By using the word, "personal", I in no way mean to imply that such experiences of dance cannot be shared with a community. On the contrary, my most profound experiences of sacred dance have been moments in which a whole community of people have been caught up and moved by the Spirit through a dance, a movement, or perhaps even a simple gesture -- some embodiment of the Word of God.

My history with liturgical dance, has been distinctly Christian. I am a United Methodist minister, trained at an overwhelmingly "Christian" seminary. In fact, it was in discovering the dances of the soul, that I begin to more fully understand and open up to the worlds of faith that extended far beyond my Judeo-Christian background. In part, this personal experience is one of the reasons I feel so strongly that our movement voices can never be limited; that we must never accept as final the statement: "THAT doesn't belong in WORSHIP". Our dances are one way to transcend the words in our religious traditions that seem to separate us into Presbyterian and Baptist, Christian and Jew, Catholic and Protestant, Moslem and Hindu, and so on. For in the Dance, we connect to the Holy, the very essence of what moves us, and in so doing reveal through our very bodies the Spirit of God, moving in and through us all.

At an early age, I endured three miserable years of ballet classes (I wanted to take jazz or tap, but my mother was convinced ballet was THE only real training worth doing) that completely ruined dance for me as something to do by choice or for pleasure. Strangely enough however, throughout my life whenever I would see dance performed, I would find myself moving in my chair, almost against my wishes as the dancers on stage moved and leapt and spun. I am grateful to minister-dancer-writer, Judith Rock, who helped me name this reaction as "kinesthetic identification". With kinesthetic identification, an observer so identifies with another person's movements that the observer physically reponds to what he or she sees happening. I paid no attention to such involuntary responses at the time and movement remained mostly just a way of getting around for me, until I went to seminary.

In seminary, words took on an entire new life of their own in the

academic pursuit of spiritual and universal truths. The Bible, theology, ethics, and liturgy were categories and subjects that felt strangely personal all of a sudden. Surprisingly, not even this new found language was enough to fully communicate the "faith stuff" inside that all this talk was churning up. Frustrated and looking for something else, out of a dark corner of my brain, I recalled two words that I either read somewhere or heard someone speak once: "Liturgical" and "dance"... "liturgical dance". Why were these words in my head! Once I did a dance to the song "Lord of the Dance" with my youth group -- but it had hardly seemed important or useful at the time.

Since that moment I've thanked God a hundred-fold for that dim little light bulb that went off in my brain. For it led to many wonderful friends and irreplaceable experiences in dance and worship. The few of us that go together once a week in a group that would become the Yale Liturgical Dancers, started with what we knew: a little stretching, a little jazz, a little aerobics, some Israeli folk dancing and even sign language for the deaf. We started where our movement connected to something, deep and good and whole inside us -- trying not to put boundaries around it or limit the choreography that almost came spilling out of us at times. Our first service together was a simple candlelight vesper with an ancient Israeli candle dance, "Likrat Shabbot" as a benediction. The service was held at a time different from that of the regular Yale Divinity School Chapel services -- somehow, those planning the regular services at YDS never could seem to make room for dances in worship (but that's another story and another article).

My three years with the Yale Liturgical Dancers wre wonderful. There were opportunities to work with people of all ages and faiths, to discover with them the delight and satisfaction of finding a language of faith we had never known before. I was astonished to see so many movement voices coming from older people, young children, youth, men, women -- people waiting to be given permission to release the dances of heaven and earth that moved them. No one seemed to need anyone to teach them the steps; they some how know what to do, but only lacked a sense that such an expression of prayer was legitimate. As workshop leaders, we came to think of ourselves as simply the "unlockers" of the floodgates, calling out the dark and the light, the pain and the pleasure, the laughter and the gloom, the confusion and the peace of people in love with God and their faith.

I now work full time in the Sacred Arts field as the Executive Director for the Foundation for Religion and the Arts, helping churches and synagogues use the Arts more meaningfully in their worship life. Part of my work with the Foundation included developing The Vine Dance Theatre, a professional liturgical dance company based in New York City. Everyone who came to be involved with the company had come to liturgical dance along very different paths. Mine was only one such journey. However, each of us in our own unique way had reached a similar conclusion: that there is no one set of dances or style of movement, or particular gesture that belongs in "worship". As a company, we are committed to this idea and try to explore a wide variety of movement possibilities in our work. For all of life belongs in the dances of our faith, because all of life is exactly what's involved. Therefore,we must start with what is true for us when we begin to

dance. We must start with what moves us and trust that it is good enough. That might mean one choreographer will begin with a dance of dispair and separation, while another starts with a dance about peace and unity. It may mean that one dancer uses a tap shuffle-ball-change, while another uses a classical plie. It may mean that for one person a wheelchair becomes a vehicle for choreography, while for another, signing for the deaf becomes a dance proclaiming that God's love is never silenced. We are limited only by our fear of saying "yes" to the leadings of the Spirit.

At the invitation of the New York Conference of the United Methodist Church, The Vine Dance Theatre created a dance based on Psalm 100 for use in a worship service during an annual conference. Psalm 100's first words exclaim, "Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the lands". We decided on a duet between reader and dancer and that the dance medium should be tap. After the worship service, a young man approached me and said, "I've never really liked liturgical dance much; but I never knew it could be anything like this! This I like!"

I wanted to say to him, "Like this and so, so much more."

EPILOGUE

I wish to express my gratitude to Judith Rock and Carla DeSola, two important teachers who helped stretch my understanding of "sacred dance" and who challenged me to once again pursue disciplined study of classical dance technique as preparation for liturgical dance. Twenty years after my first encounter with the dreaded ballet barre, it all finally made sense, but not without the help of one more very special person. Ann Cowlin was the first, and by far the best of what would be many ballet teachers in my adult life. While Ann never professed any particular religious faith, I had to say almost nothing for her to understand what liturgical dance was all about and why a 22-year old seminary student was in her beginning ballet class. She already knew; and it had everything to do with dancing all her life. •

IN THE BEGINNING — A NEW CHAPTER AND GOD SAID IT IS GOOD

by Pam Gwozdz
Ohio Chapter

With every new creation first comes a dream, a vision, a birth-giving idea. While attending the Festival of 87, Carolyn Horvath, Kathryn Mihelick, and I felt a strong sense of commitment to form a Chapter in Ohio. With a little enthusiastic push from Barrie, we knew we could channel the interest of the many lovely, talented people who were already dancing and moving in the Spirit; we felt a real call to network and bring together these friends and fellow dancers under an Ohio Chapter. We said "yes" in June and came back to Ohio. The adventure was underway, along with much paperwork, organizing, and lots of telephone calls, mostly to Nlancaster, PA., so we could meet our October 1 deadline and officially be a Chapter this year. More than anything else there was much prayer and love. Members responded quickly, and by the middle of August we had enough to form a Chapter.

As Liturgical Dance Director at St. Joseph Christian Life Center, I held a Liturgical Dance Weekend the first weekend of October. It all danced and flowed so well: many of those interested in the weekend were Sacred Dance Guild members, and some participants joined the Guild. We seemed to be moving in a chorus line of faith. The weekend was a gifted celebration. So often I thought of Festival 87. It was good. There were 25 at the workshop, which closed with a dance liturgy on Sunday. We had our first meeting of the Ohio Chapter following lunch. Twenty gifted, enthusiastic people attended, including 15 active members who were all very excited about the new beginning, and we knew it was good.

With God all things are possible, even forming an official Chapter in three months. It took direction, which definitely comes from the Lord, it took commitment that came from six dancing feet, and it took lots of love and support from a community eager for a Liturgical Dance Ministry. ●

TO DANCE IS TO WAKE UP

by Cynthia Winton-Henry

We may ignore, but we can nowhere evade,
the presence of God.
The world is crowded with God.
God walks everywhere incognito.
And the incognito is not always hard
to penetrate.
The real labour is to attend.
In fact, to come awake.
Still more, to remain awake.

—C.S. Lewis

To dance is to wake up.

It begins with a tenuous urge, a desire, often a dream. "I've always wanted to dance." It begins with a step. A step into a room where the chairs have been pushed aside, where the heat is on and there are other people gathered, most of them secretly anxious and wondering how they got themselves into this situation. It had seemed a good idea. But now facing the chance to dance, the question arises . . . "Should I be here?"

It always begins with the body. In human experience there is nothing outside the experience of being a body. All that we call spirit, emotion, mind, Times of hating the image, times of reveling in it. Awake! The Lord your God has created you.

The Hebrews understood the body as animated Spirit. No separation. No compartments. Often we speak of our emotions or thoughts as separate from our bodies. But I affirm that our intelligence is physical. Our awareness is physical. Our thoughts are physical. Our feelings are physical. Are our spirits separate from our bodies? From my perspective our spirits have everything to do with the physical. Is it possible that everything in the universe is "physical," having to do with physics? Even that which is invisible? I find myself hunching that God might be somehow physical, too.

A wonderful book exploring this idea is *And the Trees Clap Their Hands: Faith Perception and the New Physics* by Virginia Stem Owens. She says:

> *. . . we're dancing. Locked in an embrace with the world, our retinal cells quivering at the approach of the pulsating photons like any giddy girl at the prom, we are ourselves phenomena dancing with phenomena. No more looking at things in perspective, artfully abstracting ourselves from the situation as though we feared rejection, feared finding no partner. We are a little clumsy, it's true, and having forgotten most of the steps. We're inhibited and more than a little embarrassed at throwing ourselves into the arms of the universe with such abandon. Other peoples seem to have mastered the necessary interpretations of the movements more successfully than we of the West, who are understandably rusty after so many centuries of trying to act like machines. Many of us rush off to find foreign dance masters at the expense of losing our own long neglected lore.*
>
> *Still, the greatest thing is to say Yes to the invitation. (p. 49)*

To say Yes to the dance is to say yes to the process of awakening. Technique class is a place of spiritual discipline, of awakening. There I become acquainted with many difficult, paradoxical and wonderful truths concerning what it is to be a human being and a person of faith. Standing before the mirror I come face to face with my self. Oh, this is what I look like. Times of hating the image, times of reveling in it. Awake! The Lord your God has created you.

In the studio battle is waged with the forces of gravity. What does it mean to be a person with limits: searching for balance, for strength, for the ability to turn and to leap, for a way to articulate clearly with a gesture and a beat of the foot, while noticing the sluggishness, the weakness of the thigh muscle, the toppling turn. Limits. Do I run from them? Pretend they are not there? Give into them? What? Awake to your limits. Learn to love them, for you are human and not God.

Studying dance I learn to follow. The teacher speaks in half words, in sounds, in rhythms, she speaks physically. I watch. I concentrate. I practice listening with my whole body, eyes, ears, touch, and particularly through my sense of movement, that sense that connects me with the movement of others: kinesthetic identification. Can I follow? Can I replicate? How closely? How much of my uniqueness as a mover can I surrender? When do I take the floor and fill a combination with ME? When do I become servant responding to the call of a Maker who is intent on bringing into the world a creation larger than ME? Awake! Follow Me.

Choreographing and being choreographed on awaken me to fundamental dynamics and conditions of relationship to myself and others.

Trust. Leap into his arms? Fall from their shoulders? You want me to be her footstool for how long?

Partnership. Dancing across the floor, working collaboratively. Can we get ourselve together? Can we move together? Two of us, three of us, ten of us, a hundred? How slowly will we have to go for everyone to move together?

Touch. Hardest of all. Most wonderful. Touch is a function of partnering. Hand grabbing thigh, waist. Torsos cupping one another. Backs supporting hips. Legs interlocking. Fingers lightly interlaced. All Churchly Christian bodily reserve is confronted by a simple task like lifting your neighbor or holding someone who is bent over. It is what Christians would say they are called to do. (But not really?) Are we not dying to throw ourselves with abandon into the arms of a community of saints? Once, in a liturgy I did this. After communion in a downtown Cathedral I ran full of folly across the chancel and leapt into eight awaiting arms. It was the most daring part of worship. It was total body. It was the Incarnation. It was delightful. It was Christian community. O.K., O.K., it was also a Mass. Can the Christian community handle the Joy and Vitality of the Body? Of the Body of Christ?

To dance is to awaken ourselves in many areas simply because all these areas have the Body as the common denominator. We awaken our emotions. Memories are released and brought to light. We awaken our sexuality or pretend it not there keeps us from the very important recognition that we are responsible for our sexuality, for loving ourselves as sexual and for respecting the sexuality of others. We awaken to the movement, the

experience, the whole bodily being of others. Dance leads the body into a process of sharpening all its modes of perception. It becomes increasingly sensitive to itself and to others. Eugene Gendlin's book *Focusing* explores how this process, this awakening to the body and its wisdom, assists in self-understanding and problem solving. It is a matter of noticing and paying attention. It is a contemplative act.

Hurray for waking up! It is the movement toward healing, toward communion, toward prayer itself. But, waking up to the Body, its needs, the needs of others; waking up to the world, to the stucco on the wall and the grooves in the floor, waking up to the sound of knees popping and feet squaling across a lacquered floor, waking up to the pains in my neck, and the rush of adrenalin that comes before dancing in front of others, waking up the crinkle-nosed woman in the third row and the six year old standing on the pew in order to see, waking up to the feeling of terror in doing something new, waking up to the anxiety of a partner pacing the floor and unwilling to talk, waking up to a world ready at any moment to burst into beauty or disaster . . . waking up is not easy.

The cost of awakening is pain. Dance awakens us. It awakens the body to all of life and there included is both pain and suffering. Awakening seems like such a nice idea, conjuring images of buds blooming and young children drowsy from sleep looking up silently at the world. But there is more to it than that. It is a journey. Thank God it is gradual. It is a journey into the fullness of life. We complain to God like the Israelites in the wilderness "How did we know that the fullness of life, being whole, meant experiencing and having *all* of it: pain, joy, anger, tension, relief, silence, aloneness, busyness, boredom, ease, awkwardness? Can't we go back to Egypt, back to that more comfortable, familiar oppression?"

As dancers in the Church the epiphany for us is that the urge to dance is an invitation to all the surprises of awakening. Likewise, our bodies and our dances invite the Church to awaken as both bodies and The Body. As we become the invitors we have responsibility to remember that waking up is acute, that it is often confrontational. If there is reluctance in the community to embrace the dance or the body consider the cost that we all pay for awakening. Be compassionate. Consider the tentativeness and fear that accompanies deep change.

I believe the Church desires to dance, to dance with abandon, to be the fully human Body of Christ. But the road is necessarily long. What can we do while we watch the Church be hesitant, questioning, secretly analyzing the cost? What can we do while waiting for that undescribable day, the Day of Dancing?

1) We can dance, dance to remain awake, to notice, observe and experinece all of this being human. This single act has power to realign systems and peoples.

2) We can learn to make room for the questions, the hesitancy, even the unwillingness to dance. It is all part of the Dance. Perhaps more amazingly part of our own process of waking, waking up to the whole Body dancing with its Love. Waking up is not seeing what we want to see. It is seeing what is.

It is as though we are on the Mount with Jesus. It says:

> And there appeared before him an angel from heaven, strengthening him. And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly; and his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down upon the ground. And when he rose from prayer, he came to the disciples and found them sleeping for sorrow, and he said to them, "Why do you sleep? Rise and pray that you may not enter into temptation." —Luke 22:43-46

Let the dancing angels come to strengthen us that we may ourselves have the courage to stay awke with the Holy. •

Membership News

Please Patronize our Advertisers!

FINA Dancewear, through Joyce Smillie of the SDG Executive Board, is the first advertiser in the Journal. FINA offers SDG members dancewear at wholesale prices, and the amount of their mark-up is donated to the Guild. So please take advantage of this generous offer. Send for the FINA catalogue as indicated in the ad in this issue, and benefit the Guild as well as yourself.

Correction for Sacred Dance Guild Directory 1987-88

Page 7: Committees

Chairpersons of Standing Committees:

By-laws: Mary Jane Wolbers (Pennsylvania)

Nominating: Dorothy Johnson (Maryland) with
Jeannine Bunyan (California)
Arline Terrell (virginia)

Scholarship: Joyce Smillie (Connecticut) with
Grace Parker (New York)
Susan Gunn (New York)

AFTER THE RETURN

by Barbara Lyon

After returning home to California from the outstanding Sacred Dance Guild Festival on Social Change at Sarah Lawrence College, I taught my class in "Dance Toward Wholeness" and morning Yoga for the Dance Week at Pacific School of Religion. Many commented that it was the best week we've had. Inspired by what I experienced at the Festival and the week of Dance at Pacific School of Religion, I attended the Dance Brigades' two week workshop titled "Politics and the Arts".

Sacred Dance Guild Festival participants who attended their workshops or saw their performance and are interested in making a political statement in their dance may be especially interested in knowing the Dance Brigade offer this workshop once a year. If you did not experience them, live in the Bay Area and are interested, watch for their performances. I was able to attend seven afternoon sessions on choreographing dances. The afternoon students participated in two group dances both expressive of human needs and choice making. In each dance partners created their dance within the dance. Each student also worked on developing a personal character piece throughout the two weeks. Those who were ready danced their "work in progress" for the Student Performance.

After all these years of claiming I am not a performer (my record of solo performing in front of a paying audience is four or five times at most, my work with Sacred Dance has always been to lead congregations into moving themselves and to discourage performance) I learned I am a performer. I love it especially when I have something I need to communicate. Something was forming all year that finally found its movement prayer. The possibility of being a part of triggering something in you because of who you are is exciting a energizing. i received feedback from the audience that the dances did trigger a powerful personal response for some. It is an ongoing surprise and wonder to me how much dance is needed, and does keep alive the creative potential in me and people I dance with. May we all find more and more people to dance with.

LITURGICAL DANCE STUDIES AT THE PACIFIC SCHOOL OF RELIGION, BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA

by Louise Moorhouse

Students of liturgical dance will find (not only an awakening but) a wealth of opportunities at the Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley, both in what the Pacific School of Religion offers, and in the vast wealth of artistic resources in the San Francisco Bay Area.

I spent the 1985-86 academic year at the Pacific School of Religion (PSR). The school offers several courses include Dr. Doug Adams and Cindy Winton-Henry. As well, the Community Dancers meet once a week to explore faith through dance under the direction of Michael Mansfield.

Each summer PSR holds three courses, each a week long, on religion and the arts. One week is devoted to dance, one to humor, and one to fine art.

PSR is part of the Graduate Theological Union (GTU). Each year other schools in the GTU offer sacred dance courses that PSR students may take. Professors offering courses that don't focus on dance directly, often allow dance to be incorporated by the students.

In the Bay Area there are churches that use liturgical dance on a regular basis. The Community Congregational Church in Tiberon has a group that meets regularly to practice. They dance for special occasions in the church year. At St. Gregory Nyssen Episcopal Church in San Francisco,

they include several simple dances from the early church every Sunday. The congregation participates in these dances.

Body and Soul is a professional dance company based in the Bay Area. The dancers create out of their religious world-view, and can be seen in concert, or at workshops they present. Company members are among the adjunct faculty at PSR.

There are many local dance companies and excellent dance teachers. Names and addresses can be obtained in a published directory available at Black Oak Books in Berkeley. The Shawl-Anderson School has an excellent reputation, as does Mills College. Classes are also available at the University of California (UCB), one block from PSR. PSR students can obtain a free library card to the UCB libraries, and also can cross register for a certain number of classes each year at UCB at no extra cost.

UCB offers top dance performances at Zellerbach Hall, by such groups as the Dance Theater of Harlem and the Paul Taylor Dancers. Laney College in Oakland offers a series of concerts by Bay Area groups. The San Francisco Ballet Company offers special rates to students. International dance companies, as well as the top national companies, can be seen in the Bay Area every year.

Besides professional dance companies, there are folk and ethnic dance groups. The University of California has a folk dance club that meets every Friday night. Instructions are provided for beginners. At Ashkenaz on San Pablo Street in Berkeley, there are folk dance nights, and usually the dances of one country are featured on different nights. There are at least two groups doing Findhorn Sacred Dance. One group meets monthly at St. Gregory Nyssen Episcopal Church in San Francisco. The other group meets weekly in Berkeley.

There are also dance workshops offered each year. These may be a day, weekend, or week experience, and cover all types of movement and dance.

There are other dance oportunities in the Bay Area. It was impossible for me to exhaust the possibilities in nine months. I found that the faculty at PSR were very helpful, informing me about what was available.

I can recommend the Pacific School of Religion as an excellent place to study liturgical dance. Inquiries should be addressed to Dr. Doug Adams, Pacific School of Religion, 1798 Scenic Avenue, Berkeley, CA 94709.

Board Bits

CATHY PASTERNAK, RECORDING SECRETARY

To borrow a phrase from Snoopy, "To dance is to Live!" and living is to give glory and praise to the Lord, our Creator.

It is difficult to remember a time when dance was not a part of my life. It seems my perception of the world has always been in movement terms and relationships are often based more on non verbal realities than verbal ones. This has been true through my spiritual journey as well. I see the Bible and

faith in action terms and experience the Christian community in motion. My involvement with Sacred Dance over the last dozen or more years has led me to understand fully that the unity and integrity of the whole person in worship is essential in my own spiritual life. I see my ministry as one which offers to help others find that same oneness.

I came to Sacred Dance through a long history of dance training, semi-professional modern dance in Washington, DC and especially through my experiences as a Dance Therapist at St. Elizabeths Hospital under Marian Chace, the recognized founder of dance therapy.

I became an Episcopalian in 1974 and found in this church the encouragement and opportunity to extend worship beyond the traditional word-oriented framework. I was encouraged to develop workshops and conferences in the use of dance and the other art forms for worship and have continued for the past 10 years. I founded two and co-founded a third Liturgical Dance company (my family moves often!) and continue to lead workshops and dance in several area churches. I've choreographed nine high school musicals (a real labor of love-thank heaven the Spirit moves in mysterious ways!) and several civic theater productions as well.

Married twenty-one years, our three teenaged daughters continue to provide us with joy (and surprise) and remain the "blessings of this life."

Currently, I work as an Administrative Assistant in a local organization which is a network of Christian churches providing emergency needs to the poor and needy.

I am pleased to be able to serve you on the Sacred Dance Guild Board and again in the words of Snoopy suggest to you that, "If you can't dance, at least do a Happy Hop!" Let's dance in praise and thanksgiving! •

SHARON V. MILLER RODAKOWSKI

(Outgoing Treasurer; current SDG Bookkeeper)

Married to James A. Rodakowski; Jim is an architect who owns a business specializing in construction supervision. We have no children.

I own and operate La'a Hana Business Services, which is a bookkeeping service that currently handles nine full-time clients. I also teach jazz and tap dance classes.

Active in community theatre, I have appeared in Oregon community theatre productions of "Oliver"; "How to Succeed In Business Without Really Trying"; and, "Chamber Music." I've also appeared in Hawaii community theatre productions of "Musical Theatre Showcase"; "Musical Comedy Tonight"; "Dames at Sea"; "Bertha, The Beautiful Typewriter Girl"; and, "A Little Bit of Broadway."

I still study ballet, modern, jazz, tap, hula, tahitian, baladi, and choreography.

Danced in a Portland, Oregon dance studio production called "Pairs Productions;" danced with a professional Hawaiian entertainment group in Oregon; danced in two annual benefit productions for the Lucy Henriques Medical Center in Waimea, Hawaii; danced in a community

theatre production called "Musical Theatre Dance Showcase" in Waimea, Hawaii.

Choreographed four community theatre productions: "Dark Deeds at Swan's Place..."; "The Red Shoes"; "A Little Bit of Broadway"; and, "Dirty Work in High Places."

Member of National Sacred Dance Guild for 15 years. Member and former Treasurer of Columbia-Willamette Chapter. Have choreographed sacred dances for 10 years. •

Chapter News

ILLINOIS (Lakeshore)

Reported by **Diane Tucker**, *Libertyville*

The Spring Workshop began in prayer followed by warmups in a circle to The Blue Green Hills of Earth, a hymn. Then we worked in partners sharing burdens and gifts from the Lord which we imagined in baskets. Each person had a basket to dance with. This exercise was close to my heart as I had been working through the winter on a basket dance to be done at my brother, Austin's wedding. Using the words "it is my delight to do thy will, yea, thy law is within my heart" from Psalm 40, I began with the Sacred Heart of Christ held in the basket, and composed a prayer for the couple, giving the basket to the bride at the end of the dance. At our workshop we ended the first hour with a common basket containing the Holy Spirit, sharing it and giving it to one another.

The second hour began with Pat Sherer leading us in the Doxology in song and movement. Having been taught Pat's version of Panis Angelicus and Lord Have Mercy, we prepared for an informal worship srvice. Pat danced wisdom, other dancers came in with tablecloth, flowers, Bible, and candle, and I brought in eleven children. Several hymns were danced. Pat Sherer sang and played the auto harp and we ended with the basket dance and passing it in the congregation. The children enjoyed dancing for other dancers, and to my delight the other dancers said what the children contributed was "exquisite".

Advertise in the Journal

Ad per ONE (1) issue

Full page inside cover	$200.00
Full page inside	$150.00
One-half (½) page inside	$100.00
One-quarter (¼) page inside	$ 60.00
One-eighth (⅛) or business card	$ 40.00

Ad per THREE (3) issues

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One-half (½) page inside	$275.00
One-quarter (¼) page inside	$150.00
One-eighth (⅛) or business card	$ 95.00

CLASSIFIED Ads and Personals

1—10 words	$ 5.00
10—20 words	$ 8.00
20—30 words	$13.00
30—40 words	$17.00

Gently used sacred dance costumes - Tunics, two full Hindu skirts, others. Reasonable. Write, will reply in detail.

Vira Klawe, NC

Thank you Sacred Dance Guild for being with Creativity and Love.

Clark Eliott

Deadines for the Journal: August 15, December 15 and March 15.

Deadlines for the Events Calendar: September 15, January 15, April 15

Articles of 500 words or less, dance activity, chapter/region/membership news, letters, and black and white photographs should be sent by deadline dates to: **Sacred Dance Guild Journal, Toni' Intravaia, Editor, 201 Hewitt, Carbondale, IL 62901.**

Memos From The Minutes
Memos From The Minutes
Memos From The Minutes

(September 26, 1987)
Organizational Meeting

Ohio Chapter Application

Discussion was held on the application for a new Chapter in Ohio.

Board of Directors Meetings

Dates were established for Board of Directors meetings for 1987-1988. October 31, 1987, December 5, 1987, February 6, 1988, May 7, 1988 with the Festival July 5-10, 1988.

(October 31, 1987)
Michigan Sales Tax

The treasurer will investigate the status of the Michigan sales tax exemption application and will talk to the bookkeeper-accountant concerning necessary action.

Bulk Mailing Permit

The corresponding secretary will apply for a bulk mailing permit. The retiring corresponding secretary will take care of the federal taxes status 501 (c) (3) which must be filed for new chapters and is filing copyright application for the registration of Vol. 29 of the Journal.

Festival 88 is moving along; faculty is determined; concert plans are underway, flyers have been mailed.

Regions and Chapters

There are 9 chapters and 29 regions to date.

Ohio Chapter

It was moved and passed that Ohio be considered a chapter.

Cathy Pasternak,
Recording Secretary

Recommended Reading

AWAKENING SACRED DANCE THROUGH SPIRITUALS AND SCRIPTURE by Joella Chew, 25 pages, 1987, $3.00. Available from The Sharing Company, P.O. Box 2224, Austin, Texas 48768-2224. Send $3.00 per copy plus $1 for postage/handling.

Joella Chew awakens sacred dance through black spirituals that are so grounded in scripture. And the lyrics adapted by black poet Christa Dixon (to such traditional spirituals as "Steal Away," "Michael Row De Boat Ashore," "There is a Balm in Gilead," and more) speak a liberating Word to each of us facing modern slaveries: addictions to pills, alcohol, junk foods and peer pressures. And many of the other lyrics renew our strength especially when combined with the movement methods designed by Joella Chew who leads us through a fundamental dance class which combines voice and movement. She includes a movement philosophy, a complete class outline and detailed pedagogy and all necessary accompanying music with lyrics and scores. (An accompanying cassette is available.)

As pastoral counseling focuses increasingly on the wider activities of preventative pastoral care that include worship and education and spiritual disciplines, dancers may increasingly understand their work as therapeutic pastoral care. Dancers (untrained in psychology) should not attempt long term dance therapy to counsel those with very serious problems any more than most ministers (with their minimal psychological training) should attempt long term counseling. In both cases, such serious cases should be referred to others with proper training. But the dancers and ministers may play an important role in preventative care. And Joella Chew's work is an important step in that direction.

Sacred Dance Activity

CALIFORNIA

Napa Valley, The Carmelite Fathers' Monastery, October 24 shared light in dance "You are the Light of the World" which was a day of sharing movement, costumes, music, encouragement. The Sun Dancers had workshops on October 29 "Theater of Self-Discovery" with Tanya Krajewski and November 10 "The Great Goddess: An Autumn Festival" with Mitani D'Antien at the Community Congregational Church, Tiburon. On Friday, October 16 at the Oakland Cathedral in Oakland "Jesuit Ordination Service" included processional, recessional, alleluia and two solo pieces with banners, incense, and Book. In Hilmar on October 18 at the Hilmar Covenant Church the morning worship was focused on "The Beatitudes" with drama and dance to David Haas' "Blest Are They."

CANADA

Gayda Errett: I attended the Vancouver School of Theology's Sacred Dance Workshop featuring Carla de Sola as the resource leader. Carla graciously, prayerfully and worshipfully journeyed us through the eight Beatitudes during the weekend event on August 7-9th. Approximately 26 people attended from all walks of life and professions. Most participants were involved with their own congregations in sacred dance and seeking affirmation and insight in the ministry of sacred dance in their area of expertise. Rev. Dave Spence, former member of Sacred Dance Guild, co-ordinated the workshop. I spoke briefly and encouraged the participants to consider membership not only for regional membership purposes, but to consider establishing their own chapters in the city they were located.

Anna Douthwright, Ontario: Our Sacred dance group in London now has a name, UPON THE EARTH SACRED DANCERS...Enclosed is a poem that I wrote in meditating on our name. Maybe it is of interest to others?

> **EARTHEN VESSELS:** The potter's hands/ mould the clay./ Earth softened by water, / Hardened by fire. / Clay pot, receptacle, / for water, fire, air. / Empty, earthen, sacred vessel, / Ancient yet new. / The dancer's body, / Forms the dance. / Body softened by water, / Strengthened by earth, / Hardened by fire, / Strengthened by earth / Enlivened by breath. / Instrument for the dance, / Empty, earthen, sacred vessel, / Ancient yet new. / Round shape, / spiraling, circling, / Joining heaven, upon the earth.

Sylvia Bryant

FLORIDA

Sylvia Bryant, Regional Director: October 3 a workshop was held at St. Michaels Episcopal Church in Gainesville. Sylvia Bryant was elected to the National Fellowship of United Worship and Arts Council for 1987-89. This is a large ecumenical group which brings together over a thousand persons every two years. It is scheduled for Claremont, California in 1989. The *Tallahassee Democrat* on Saturday August 29 carried a fine article on *Devotion in Motion* that in general stated some churches use dance as sacred symbolism and that whatever the reason, sacred dance has been around for hundreds of centuries and in most cases it's an expression of worship. The article was done by Alicia Byrd of the staff.

ILLINOIS

The Seabury-Western Theological Seminary in Evanston, Illinois was host to a Liturgy and the Arts weekend workshop October 16-17, 1987. The workshop was coordinated by Milner Seifert, from Wilmette, Illinois. Workshop leaders were the Rev. J. Gary Gloster, (Clowning), from Charlotte, North Carolina and Ms. Cathy Pasternak, (Liturgical Dance), from North Muskegon, Michigan.

Janet Skidmore: Saturday, December 5, 1987 from one until five Christmas Carol Dancing Down State Street will happen for the fifth consecutive year. They came and they shared the message of Christmas with the shoppers on State Street!

MICHIGAN

A "Worship and Dance Workshop" was held in Holland, Michigan October 10, 1987. The event was co-sponsored by Grace Episcopal Church and the SDG. The workshop leader was Cathy Pasternak, liturgical dancer/worksho from North Muskegon, Michigan. The day-long workshop included liturgical dance concepts; movement meditations, experiences, prayers; improvisation; and choreography for 4 liturgical settings. Fenna Stoub, SDG President, assisted in the leadership of the workshop guiding two of the participant groups in their choreography.

MINNESOTA

Virginia Huffine reports: Seraphim III of Rochester conducted a seminar and workshop on Dance in the Church as artists-in-residence at LutherNorthwestern Seminary in St. Paul, on October 10, 1987. Members of the trio presented sessions in special technique for sacred dance, Tai Chi as a Christian expression, and creating dance movement accompanied by the spoken word. The seminar concluded with dance in the Chapel of the Incarnation by Participating groups fromt he Twin Cities area, for which Seraphim III offered not only critiques but followed by their own offering of a chancel-drama. The group: Virginia Huffine, Ronnie Oliveto and Jean Waters.

Attention: Guild Members!
How about sponsoring an ad
in the JOURNAL to publicize
the work of your group, or
your own dance offering?
See price list on page 28.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Elsie M. Keeffe reports: Attended the Phoenix conference in Windsor, Canada and the United Methodist Fellowship of Worship through Music and the other Arts. Resalie Branigan invited Elsie to participate for one of the evening worship services. Then actively was part of the Workshop in Concord in September, with registrants from New York, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Maine and Rhode Island and New Hampshire. Anne Rousseau of Cary teaches dance and yoga with Liturgical expressive Art and Christian Yoga included at the First Methodist Church in Cary. On

October 16th and 17 Anne had a retreat "Our Bodies in Prayer" at the Avila Retreat Center, Durham, North Carolina.

From **Elsie:** Hi! When such a great group as gathered in the interest of sacred dance, a lot is sure to happen. It did at Concord, September 20 at Wesley United Methodist Church.

S haring in love and learning
A cquiring new skills
C aring for each other
R esponding to new things
E xciting to meet so many sacred dancers
D ancing! dancing! and more dancing!

D ining with much conversation
A cknowledgement of great hostesses
N ational, regional, and local leadership
C ommunication without words
E xceptional kitchen staff and host church

W ork
O ptions
R esources for present and future
K nowledge
S ustenance; spiritual and physical
H elping each other
O pening minds
P lanning for October 8, 1988

NEW JERSEY

Colley Ballou, Regional Director:

October 1987 at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine' New York City, Sandy Smith and Colley Ballou joined the Omega Liturgical Dance Co., in Earth Mass (Missa Gaia) for the feast of St. Francis. It was choreographed by SDG members Carla DeSola and Allan Tung and performed with The Paul Winter Consort and combined Cathedral choirs.

November, 1987 St. Paul's Youth Dance Choir, Nutley, N.J., under the Direction of Colley Ballou traveled to the First Congregational Church in cloister to present a pre-Thanksgiving danced worship. Thanksgiving eve., combined dance choirs from Grace Episcopal with Judith Burwell, and St. Paul's Church leading the processional hymn and a congregational movement in the town of Nutley's Ecumenical Worship. The dancers opened the festivities with Virgil Thompson's *The Plow that Broke the Fields*, accompanied with organ, harp, and flute.

The **Presbyterian Church** of Bound Brook, N.J. is celebrating its 300th anniversary in 1988, and New Jersey members of SDG have been invited to make a special danced service for the celebration. Nancy Brock, P. Merle Wade and Colley Ballou will be joined by Associate Pastor Joann Germershausen for the service of dance on March 6, 1988.

NEW YORK

Nancy Roth reports: Saturday November 21, Trinity Church, Wall Street in New York City hosted a day of religion and the arts in celebration of Hildegard of Bingen, 12th century mystic, abbess, musician, poet and artist.

Nancy Roth: "We're just home from England, where last Sunday (August) I preached at St. James, Piccadilly, and then gave a movement workshop in the afternoon attended by 35 to 40 people, all enthusiastic. The message spreads....."

NORTH CAROLINA

Vira Klawe reports: (Ed. note: Vira writes of Isadora Duncan, long noted as a dancer and teacher using dance, faith/religion as being "one".) Sculptor Rodin: "Isadora's dance is sculpture without effort. She shows arrested action or gesture promising further action. She is Greek frieze come alive." Isadora herself said: "I feel I must transcend any dance FORM; music, dance and sculpture are sister arts which can say the same things. The dance of the future will be found in the dance of the past but not as a copy. There is a dance of eternity....The dance of the future must be highly religious; any art which is not religious is not art. Only movements of the body must be in harmony with the movements of the earth." Don't all those statements fit within the concepts of Sacred Dance? I think so.

PENNSYLVANIA

From **Mary Jane Wolbers:** Mary Jane Wolbers will be a presenter and a delegate from the USA at the Dance and the Child International Conference in London next July, as the official representative of the National Dance Association. While in England, she will be working also with the ministers of dance and cathedral choir members with whom she has had professional and personal contact over the years through her involvement in the Sacred Dance Guild. Her Spring '88 sabbatical from East Stroudsburg University will be used for preparation for the conference and also to respond to requests for sacred dance workshops and lecture-demonstrations in the U.S.

RHODE ISLAND

Kate Garland reports: In November I conducted a sacred dance session as part of the United Methodist District Christian Education Workshop. It was titled: "To Move ' Is to Dance ' Is to Pray".

SOUTH CAROLINA

From **Gretchen Carroll:** I first learned about Sacred Dance in Virginia Beach where I saw a small group doing it at the Association for Research and Enlightenment. I was told by the leader about the Guild. Then I attended Festival '85. I had never done any Sacred Dance before but I have always loved to dance. Whenever an opportunity presented itself, I tried to take advantage of training. I had a few months of ballet, about two months of traditional Hawaiian dance in Honolulu, a few weeks of Korean traditional dance in Seoul, and within the last few years some modern dance at the University of South Carolina here in Beaufort.

TEXAS

Clark Elliott, Corpus Christi: Clark Elliott danced in the Love and Light at the Corpus Christi Center for Attitudinal Healing in celebration of the Harmonic Convergence.

WISCONSIN

The fall meeting of the **Milwaukee Altar Guild,** St. Luke's Episcopal Church, Madison, Saturday, September 26. Cathy Pasternak, liturgical dancer/workshop teacher from North Muskegon, talked about the history of liturgical dance and its place in contemporary worship. She interspersed her remarks with group movement that illustrated and emphasized the ideas. She taught specific dance movements and assisted the group in choreographing their movement to a psalm. The day ended with a Eucharist in which the group liturgically danced with a solo piece by Ms. Pasternak.

On September 27, **Ms. Cathy Pasternak,** liturgical dancer/workshop leader from North Muskegon, Michigan introduced liturgical dance to St. Luke's Episcopal Church, Madison in the Sunday worship service. She taught the congregation hand and arm movements to a hymn which was used during the service as the offertory, with Cathy dancing the verses. She also danced the Introit and Psalm 25.

REPORT

Festival 88, Sacred Dance Guild
30th Anniversary
And the Earth Shall Dance!
Confirmed staff at this time includes:

David Taylor Dance Theatre
Paul Fiorino
Doug Adams
Forrest Coggen
Connie Fisher
Polynesian Dance with High Chief "Vui"
Sioasi Day Star, an American Indian woman of Blackfoot/Cree heritage who will present a program of poetry, dance, and music based on Native American and tribal histories adapted for the contemporary stage.

This is the Sacred Dance Guild's 30th anniversary and will be an event you won't want to miss.

July 6-10, 1988, Loretto Heights College, Denver, Colorado 80236
Contact: Peggy Reagon 303-455-0355 or Ann Blessin 303-377-9114.

FESTIVAL 88 ~ Sacred Dance Guild

30th Anniversary

JULY 6-10, 1988

Loretto Heights College
3001 S. Federal Blvd.
Denver, Colorado 80236

Contact:
Peggy Reagan (303) 455-0355
Ann Blessin (303) 377-9114

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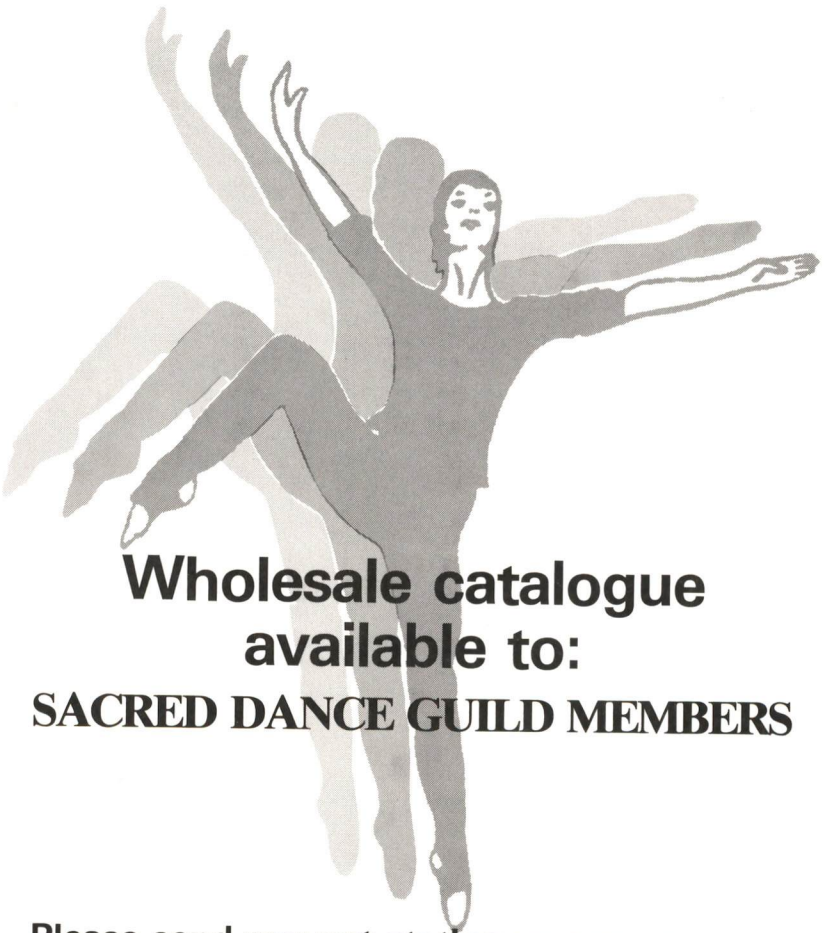

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